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OLC 70-0355

27 May 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of Mahon Subcommittee on Cambodian  
Logistics Through Cambodia

1. On 26 May 1970, I accompanied Messrs. George Carver, SAVA, and [redacted], Deputy Director of OER, who briefed members of our House Appropriations Subcommittee on the above and related subjects in response to questions raised during our appearance before the Subcommittee on 14 May 1970.

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2. Chairman Mahon had made clear his desire that all Subcommittee members hear the briefing, and all were present for at least some of the time. Minshall remained throughout, Mahon and Andrews heard most of the briefing, and Bow appeared briefly. Ralph Preston, Staff Assistant, was present throughout and made notes.

3. [redacted] began by outlining the history of the community's problems in assessing the relative importance of Sihanoukville as compared with the Ho Chi Minh Trail as a source of logistical support for Communist forces in the southern half of South Vietnam.

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4. Mr. Carver quoted excerpts from the Director's testimony before the Subcommittee in March 1969 to show that the Agency's position on this question has not changed significantly for the past couple of years.

5. The ensuing discussion touched on a number of related matters, including ARVN capabilities to carry on after U.S. withdrawal from Indochina; the North Vietnamese military, political

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and morale situation; the political and military situation in Cambodia; the outlook for Cambodia after U.S. and ARVN withdrawal; the prospects for a resumption of Communist logistical activity in Cambodia after U.S. and ARVN withdrawal; and the short-term and long-term effects of the U.S. move into Cambodia, including ChiCom and North Vietnamese military action or the lack thereof.

6. Minshall asked about the situation of the Sino-Soviet border and I briefly summarized the military picture on the Soviet side. The Chairman commented that he had been surprised to hear the Director say there might be a 50-50-chance of war between the Russians and Chinese.

7. Minshall asked what had become of COSVN headquarters. In replying, Carver explained that COSVN was an organization and not a place. The Chairman said this was well put, and it was a pity the President hadn't made it clear in his statement.

8. The meeting, which lasted approximately two hours, apparently went well and I believe all the members were satisfied that they had received a thoroughly candid and competent briefing.

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